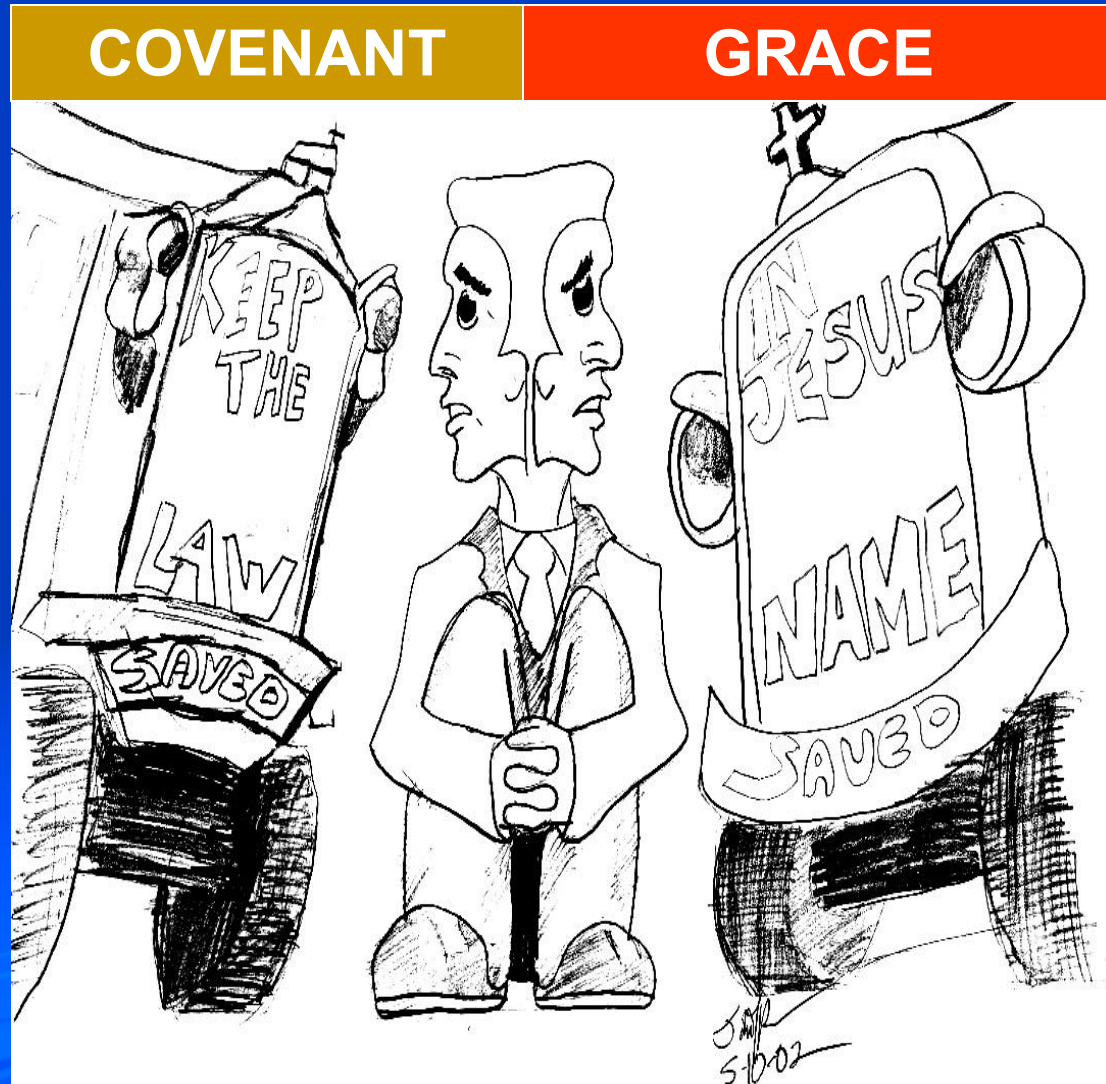
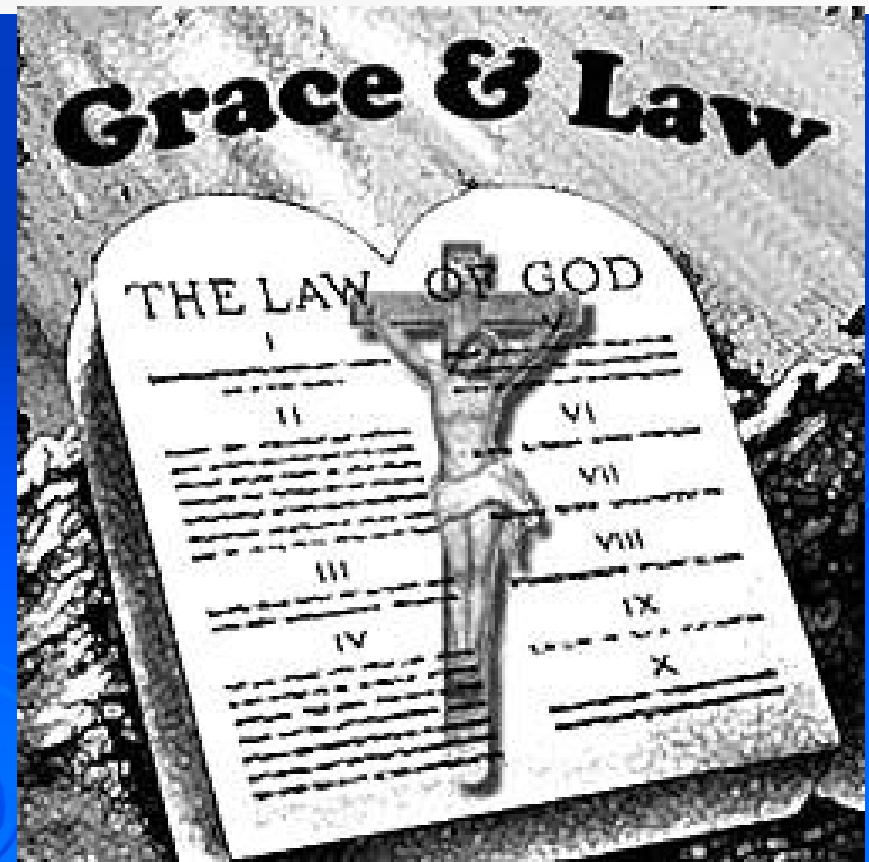


GOD KEEPS COVENANT AND GRACE

- Neh. 9:32
- Erroneous Christian doctrine that we must choose between Law and Covenant
- Grace and Covenant operate together
- Is NOT an either / or matter
- Gen.6:7 – 8
- Noach found grace



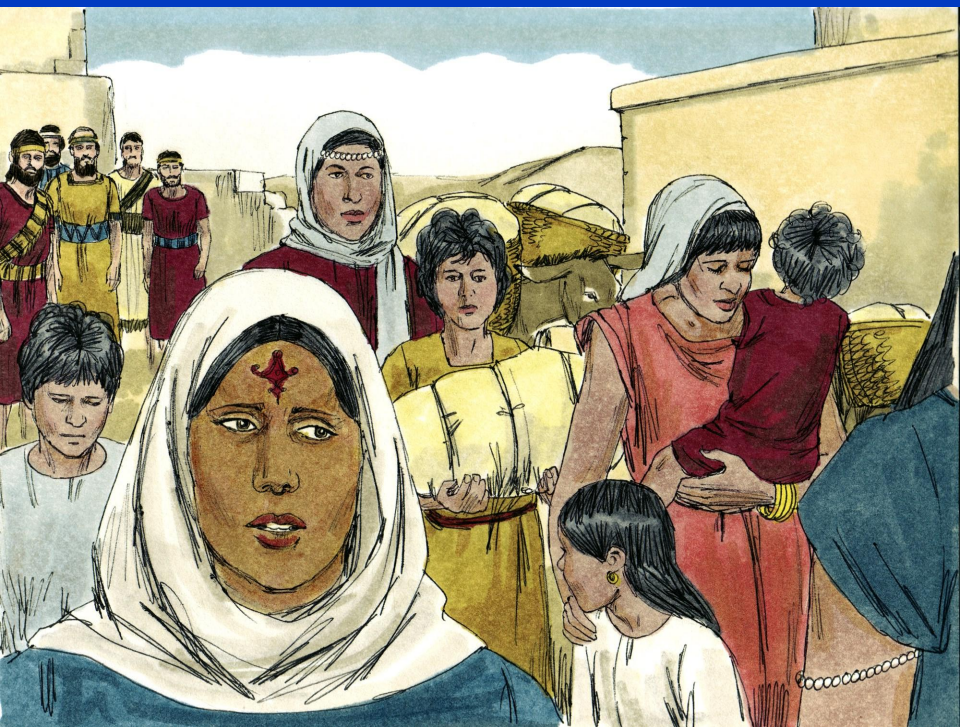
- Prayer of Neh. 9 proves that Levites believed grace was active in their lives
- Duet. 7:9
- We find the concept of grace WITHIN the Law itself !
- 900 years after the Law was written, 400 years before Christ was born
- Chapter 9 ended with a request to God to be saved from their predicament



Statement of Faith



- Nehemiah Chapter 10
- **Amana** = agreement, statement of faith
- **Berith** = Covenant
- Covenant usually involves salt and/or blood
- Leaders (lay), Levites and Priests represent the various parts that together form the whole
- This agreement ONLY represented the Jews of Judah
- 95% of Jews lived in the Diaspora, were NOT represented

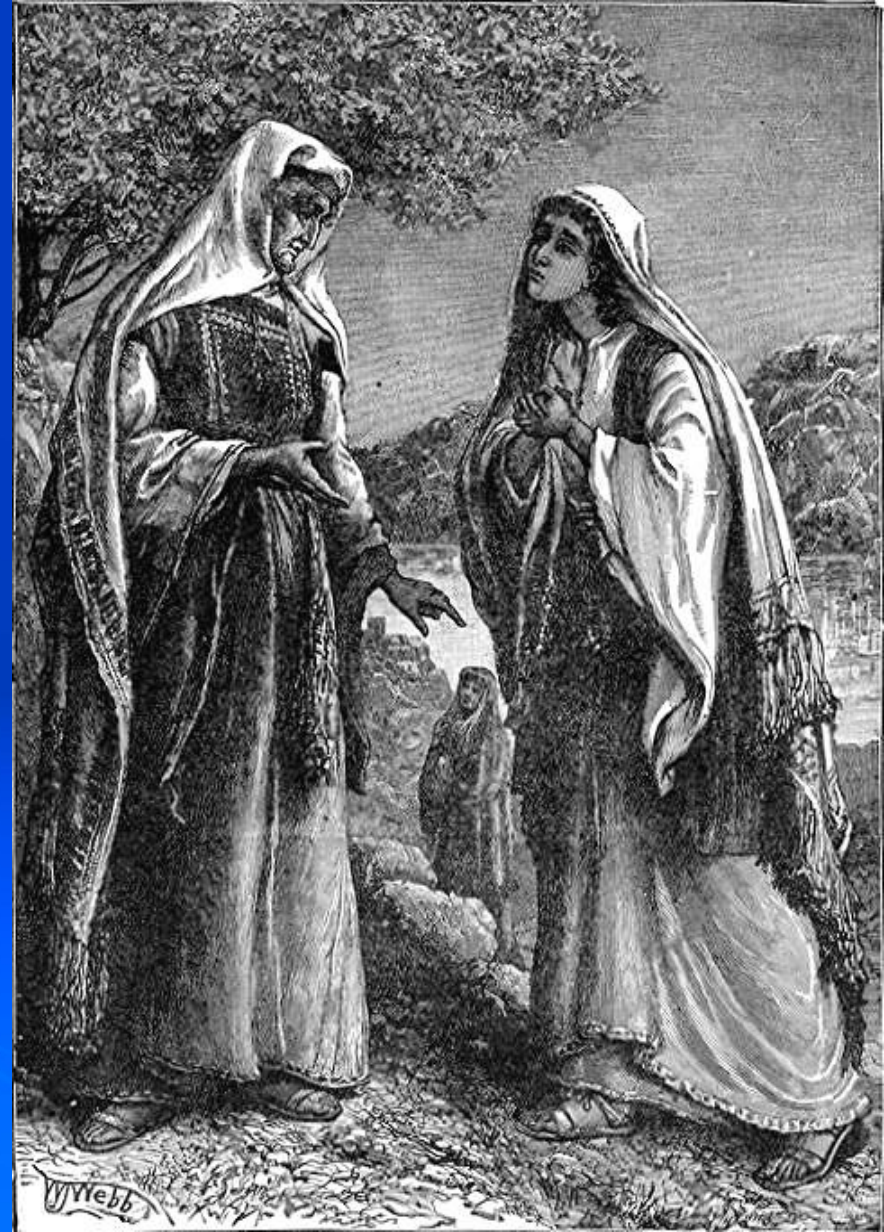


SEPARATION

- Nehemiah is the first signatory
- But Ezra is omitted
- Levites are listed
- Priests are listed
- Then “all the others” as a group
- Vs. 29 “All who had separated themselves from the peoples of the land.....”
- Neh 9:1
- Forced division along racial lines

EZRA CHAPTERS 9 & 10

- Ezra discovers that many wives are foreigners
- These are women who did NOT give up their pagan gods and practices
- Unlike Ruth
- Ruth 1:14 – 17
- *“your people will be my people, your God will be my God..”*
- Ezra 9 women did NOT make YHWH their God
- Leaders of Judah decided they had to divorce these pagan wives
- Not TECHNICALLY divorce



NEHEMIAH 9 & 10: NO DIVORCE FROM WIVES

- What is happening in Nehemiah entirely different from Ezra
- There is NO divorce occurring
- No one being sent away
- It's just that only Jews descended from Jacob could participate in the ceremonies



HIGHLIGHTING CERTAIN ELEMENTS OF THE LAW

a·dapt

/ə'dapt/

Verb

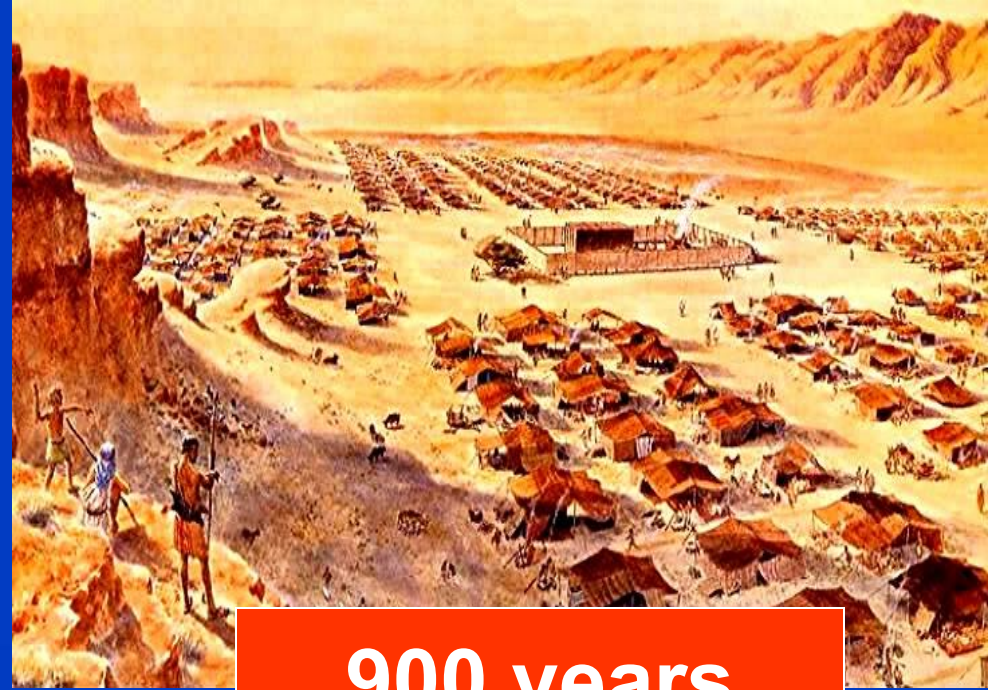
Make (something) suitable for a new use or purpose; modify.

Become adjusted to new conditions.

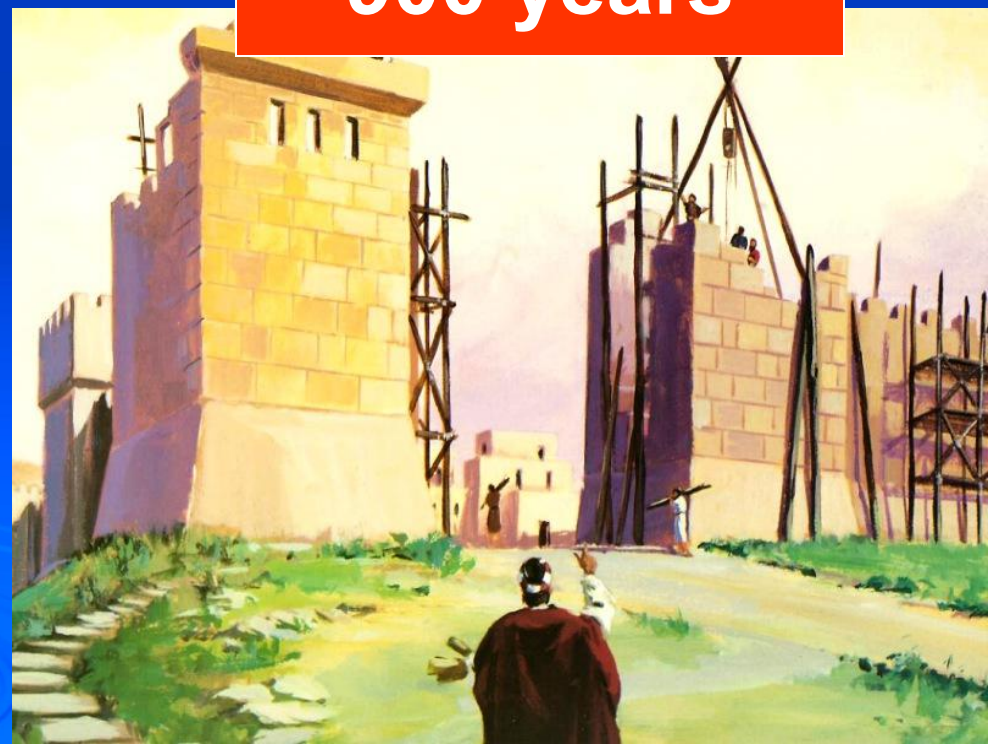
- Things they had not been doing
- Foundational behaviors for redeemed people
- Adapting the 900 year old Torah to more modern life
- 7 subjects:
- Obedience, Marriage, Shabbat, Shmittah, Temple, Altar, Firstlings

DRASTIC CHANGES

- NO NEW LAW!
- Doing the Law under changing circumstances
- In Moses' day:
- Self-governing, lived in tents, no farming, stone tools
- In Nehemiah's day:
- Persia a SuperPower, iron tools, irrigation of fields, advanced building techniques, Jews ruled by a Persian King
- How much Torah they could obey had limits



900 years



RACE SEEN AS RELIGION

- Vs. 31 Marriage
- *Am eretz* = non-Jews
- Sounds like racial purity, but is actually about religion
- There was a time when American = Christian
- Race = nationality = religion
- Non-Jewish girl who converts is now a Jew and OK to marry a Jewish man



NO SHABBAT SELLING!



- NOT whether to observe Shabbat
- Stipulation: No Jew should buy or sell with an *am eretz* on Shabbat
- A new wrinkle on the Sabbath Law
- Ex. 20:8 – 11
- Buying & selling not directly addressed, but is heavily implied

Shemittah

A year of faith



- Sabbatical Year = **Sh'mittah** = 7th year of 7 year cycle
- Sh'mittah = release
- Ex. 23:10 – 11
- Lev. 25:1 – 7
- Deut. 15:1 – 3
- At first **Sh'mittah** is all about giving the land a rest
- But Deuteronomy adds the element of release of debt



CANCEL OR POSTPONE DEBTS ?

- Lev. 25:8 – 13
- Generally, interpretation is to cancel the debt PAYMENT due on the 7th year
- But the debt remains
- In Nehemiah 10 we see a pattern of figuring out how to obey God's laws as intended, in evolving circumstances
- Believers should NOT cancel God's laws, but rather think upon how to apply them to our culture and circumstances in the SPIRIT of the Law

